

MEMORANDUM

JUNE 18, 1987

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND  
STEPHEN COYLE, DIRECTOR

FROM: LINDA BOURQUE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING  
JOHN BELL, SENIOR PLANNER

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO BOARD OF APPEAL ON  
VARIANCES NECESSARY TO CONSTRUCT THE 165 UNIT  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT AT BACK-OF-THE-HILL IN  
JAMAICA PLAIN AND ROXBURY (Z-10094 TO Z-10124)

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EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY:

This memorandum recommends that the Authority submit a positive recommendation to the Board of Appeal for variances for the Back-of-the-Hill project in Jamaica Plain and Roxbury. The 165 unit project is for first-time homebuyers, and at least 75% of the units will be sold at prices affordable to moderate income families. Modeled after the Andrew Square Project, Back-of-the-Hill would be constructed by the Bricklayers and Laborers Non-Profit Housing Company, Inc.

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The Bricklayers and Laborers Non-Profit Housing Company, Inc. proposes to construct affordable housing consisting of 165 two and three story brick townhouses modeled after the Andrew Square project. The program will include 28 one-bedroom units, 100 two-bedroom units, and 37 three-bedroom units; 5 percent of the total will be handicap accessible; there will be surface parking for 175 cars. At least seventy five percent of the units will be affordable to first-time homebuyers. This development will receive public subsidies through a CDAG, the federal government, the state, and City (for the open space component), and from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership program.

The site, called Back-of-the-Hill, is 11 acres of steeply sloped terrain, which is vacant with the exception of one house on Fisher Avenue. Approximately three acres will be retained as open space. The site is bordered by Heath Street, Estey Street, Lawn Street, Hayden Street, and Fisher Avenue. Ellingwood Street which runs through the center of the site is a street which will be re-created and widened, serving as a primary community focus.

The firm of William Rawn Associates is the architect. The Bricklayers are currently working on a Charlestown Navy Yard residential project. The Andrew Square project in South Boston was awarded a Boston Society of Architects award this year.

The context is a mixture of large institutional buildings, vacant lots, traditional three families, and new wooden pre-fabricated duplexes. The zoning districts are R-.8 and H-1. The project requires 142 variances; this large number of variances is primarily due to the 30 different applications being made, rather than treating the site as a single application.

The community has been involved to a large degree, in particular the Back-of-the-Hill Community Development Corporation which has been reviewing the project for many months. There is a much community support.

The project, due to its size, will require a Transportation Access Plan which is in process. The project has been reviewed by the City's Transportation liaison committee.

An appropriate vote follows:

VOTED: In reference to petitions Z-10094-10124, Bricklayers and Laborers Non-profit Company, Inc., 1-17 and 2-10 Estey Street, 2-48 and 1-49 Ellingwood Street, 261-317 Heath Street, 86-108 and 83-107 Rawn Street, 20-30 Hayden Street and 154-210 Fisher Avenue Jamaica Plain and Roxbury, for one hundred and forty-two variances, the Boston Redevelopment Authority recommends approval with design review.





Back of the Hill

Roxbury and Jamaica Plain

Z-10094-10124



